

APPENDIX C

YAMPA RIVER BASIN ENDANGERED FISH RECOVERY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONSENSUS STATEMENT

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Summary of the Consensus Reached August 30, 2000 at the Holiday Inn, Craig, CO, Concerning Development of the Yampa River Basin Endangered Fish Recovery and Water Development Plan

Water Supply

Acceptance of USFWS calculation that base flow needs for listed fishes in the Yampa River can be met with 7000 AF of augmentation water including a 1000 AF allowance for transit losses. This calculation was based on the average annual 2045 depletions of about 151,000 AF with a maximum annual depletion of about 169,000 AF as modeled by the CRDSS.

Acceptance of the provision of the 7000 AF of endangered fish flow augmentation from:

- * 3700 AF enlargement of Elkhead Reservoir paid for by the RIP (based on a total enlargement of Elkhead Reservoir up to about 8000 AF, using the CRWCD California Park water rights, contingent on need and subject to limitation to minimize impacts to adjacent properties.
- * 2000 AF from Steamboat Lake via lease by the RIP from CDPOR, subject to terms to be negotiated.
- * 1300 AF to be provided by the CRWCD thru lease to the RIP via several potential sources:
 - o temporary lease by CRWCD of the direct flow portion of Tri-State's water right for the Craig Station as necessary to achieve the USFWS flow targets at Maybell, up to a total annual volume of 1300 AF.
 - o from a human enlargement pool to be developed in conjunction with the fish enlargement pool in Elkhead Reservoir (provision of the 1300 AF at all, conditioned on this happening).
 - o from possible other tributary storage to be developed by the River District for this and other purposes.

Operation of the various pools will be undertaken by a water management group on a real-time basis.

Funding of the reservoir enlargements and leases necessary to provide the 7000 AF for fishes will come from the RIP, such funding is available in the legislation pending before Congress. Funding for the human related components will come from other sources such as CWCB, CRWCD, CDOW and others.

Water released for fish flow purposes will be protected via contract with CWCB and delivered, less transit losses to the best ability of the SEO.

Water for flow augmentation will only be released when necessary to meet base flow targets, based on the initiation and cessation targets.

Non-native Fish Management

The CDOW and the RIP will continue to remove northern pike from the Yampa River.

The preferred alternative for disposition of northern pike from the Yampa River is non-lethal relocation within the Yampa River basin.

The long term objective may be to screen Elkhead Reservoir to allow relocation of the northern pike removed from the river, screening paid for by the RIP.

USFWS/RIP would consider, under the case by case basis provision of the non-native stocking policy, relocation of northern pike on an interim basis to an unscreened Elkhead Reservoir.

Effectiveness, cost and necessity of non-native control measures will be continually assessed and evaluated in 5 years.

Removal of other non-natives such as channel catfish and smallmouth bass will be considered by the RIP.

* USFWS will continue to lethally remove channel catfish from DNM.

Stocking of non-native fish in the Yampa River basin will be only in accordance with the non-native stocking policies.

Screening of existing reservoirs containing northern pike and other non-natives, if required, will be funded by the RIP.

CDOW, RIP and others will continue to search for other non-native fishing opportunities within the Yampa River basin.

CDOW will work with river and water management facility owners to reduce availability of in-river spawning habitat through efforts funded by the RIP and CDOW.

Protection of Existing and Future Water Uses-ESA Compliance

The USFWS, with the assistance of the CWCB, has considered the potential effects of existing water consumption and projected future consumption through 2045, of the listed species, and determined that 6000 AF of streamflow augmentation, plus transit losses, will meet all but the most extreme circumstances, which USFWS is willing to accept.

The design and implementation of the Yampa Plan is intended to mitigate depletion impacts and result in recovery of the listed species, therefore a favorable Section 7 opinion is anticipated by those developing and implementing the plan, including water development.

The depletion impacts of the development (existing and future) and fish flow augmentation will be tabulated on a long term annual average basis

USFWS Recovery Goals for the 4 Endangered Species.

Fish species goals are being developed by the Recovery Program for use by the USFWS in preparing down listing/delisting packages. Goals will be published in the federal Regulations in October, 2000.

Score Card-population estimates (will be developed) for Colorado pikeminnow and humpback chub in the Yampa River to track changes in abundance and size structure leading to attainment of overall recovery goals-being conducted by Recovery Program. These will be published in Annual and Final reports. Bi-annual program updates will be provided. Adaption (of reports will be done) for Yampa stakeholders.

CDOW Nonnative Fish Control Reports:

- How many are being removed?
- Effects of removal on population abundance/size structure of nonnative.
- Population abundance/size structure response in native species
- Adaptation of annual reports for Yampa stakeholders.
- Stocking of bonytail and razorback suckers, with an evaluation of success.

Management objectives, in terms of population abundance and structure criteria that can be periodically and quantitatively measured, can be established to indicate status and trend of self-sustaining native fish populations; as well as non-native species. This will include both individual species as well as native and non-native species collectively.